

HOMEGOING

CELEBRATION

For

Shirley A.
HIGHTOWER

SUNRISE

October 22, 1945

SUNSET

September 14, 2025

Saturday, October 4, 2025

11:00 AM

NEW PROSPECT MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

6330 Pembroke Avenue

Detroit, Michigan 48221

Pallbearers

Family and Friends

Flower Ladies

Female Choir Members

Interment

Woodlawn Cemetery
19975 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48203

Acknowledgement

*The family wishes to thank
each and every one of you
with deep appreciation
for the many acts
of kindness
and love shown
during the passing of
our loved one.*

*May God continue to
bless each of you.*

— The Family —

Professional Services

Entrusted To

JAMES H. COLE HOME FOR FUNERALS
NORTHWEST CHAPEL
16100 Schaefer Highway
Detroit, Michigan 48235

Special thanks to
Delbrita L. Greene of
PREMIER FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES
Nashville, Tennessee



Obituary

SHIRLEY ANN THOMAS HIGHTOWER was born in Pavo, Georgia, to Alexander and Minnie Lee Thomas. She was the tenth of twelve children in a close knit and loving family.

Shirley attended Douglass High School in Thomasville, Georgia where she graduated as Salutatorian in 1963. After graduation, she made her way to Alma, Michigan where she successful completed a B.A. (English) at Alma College.

In 1967, Shirley Thomas began her illustrious career as an educator in The Detroit Public Schools System. Her first teaching assignment was at McMichael Junior High School as English Teacher and Newspaper Advisor. The 1970's brought on her most important roles. First as English Teacher, Testing Coordinator, and Yearbook Advisor at Mackenzie High School. Second, as the beautiful, blushing bride of Willie J. Hightower (1970). And third, as the mother of Shirita (1971), Kimberly(1973), and Derek(1977).

Shirley Hightower continued her career at Mackenzie High School as Achievement Specialist and High School Improvement Facilitator (1983-84), English Department Head (1985-87), and Assistant Principal (1988-2000). There were brief moves to other schools for promotions: Hamilton Middle School, Administrative Unit Head (1984-85), Brooks Middle School, Assistant Principal (1987-88). However, she was always returned HOME- Mackenzie High School.

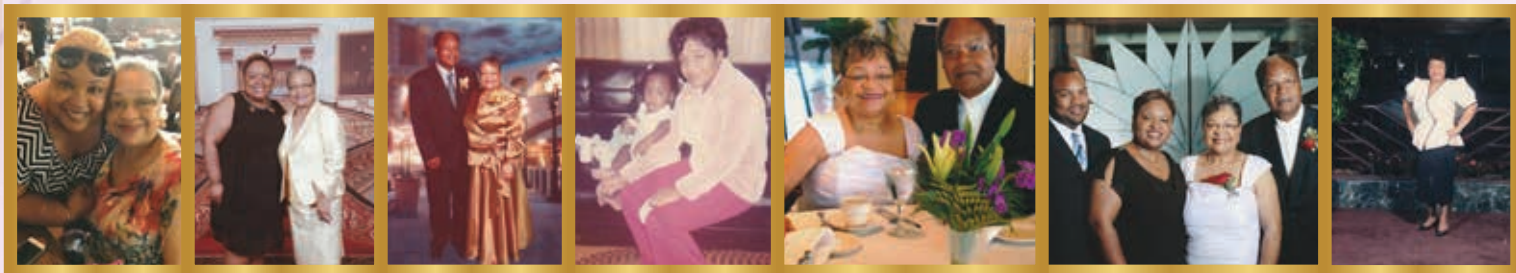
Her professional prowess was again recognized and rewarded as she was promoted to Principal of Vincent Continuing Education Center for Girls (2000-2003). Shirley spent the last leg of her career as the Principal of Chadsey High School. She retired in 2008 after having served the staff and students of Chadsey High School since 2003. To her credit, Shirley also earned a M.A. (Speech Pedagogy) from Wayne State University (1980), an Ed. Specialist (Secondary Education Administration (1988) from Eastern Michigan University, Certified Trainer of Teachers in Learning Styles (1990) University of Detroit, Coursework in Educational Leadership (1993) Marygrove College, and Coursework in Educational Leadership (2004) University of the Pacific.

On September 14, 2025, Shirley peacefully transitioned to her eternal home in Heaven with her first born daughter, Shirita, by her side.

Shirley was preceded in death by her devoted husband, Willie J. Hightower, her beloved daughter, Kimberly Hightower Dilligard, her parents, Alexander and Minnie Lee Thomas, her sisters, Hazel Blackmon, Lovie Thomas, Rachel McCastle, Duria Lee Christian, Mozella Fletcher, and Gwendolyn Randolph; and her brothers Luther Thomas, Curtis Thomas, Ulysses Thomas, and Robert Thomas.

Shirleys life and memory will be forever cherished by her daughter, Shirita; her son Derek, Sr. (Anita), her three grandchildren Star, Derek Jr., and Ryan; her sister Jacquelyn Sneed (Robert). She also leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, extended family and friends who will remember her warmth, strength, and enduring love.

Shirley's legacy is one of faith, family, and resilience. She will be remembered for the love she gave so freely, the wisdom she shared, and the joy she brought into the lives of those around her.



Order of Worship

- Organ Prelude
- Opening SentencesMinister
- Opening SelectionMinister
- Scripture *Psalm 23*
- PrayerMinister
- Special Remarks Shirita J. Hightower
- Obituary Karen P. Ridgeway
- Selection/Solo *"Leak in This Old Building"*
- Words of Comfort..... Reverend Craig Esters
- Prayer of Thanksgiving Reverend Craig Esters
- Recessional *"Going Up Yonder"*

